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PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

By: Matthew Lobdell, Missouri Botanical Garden

Early in my career, one of the veteran staff I worked with described the trials of being a horticulturist as getting through the doldrums of midsummer weeding. I'm sure this rings true for many of you. The weeds show no sign of slowing and in fact seem to be only growing faster. When the humidity finally breaks after a summer storm, the plants still seem to need more watering. Fortunately, for us magnolia-philes, there are those late season flowers of *Magnolia grandiflora* and *Magnolia virginiana* to keep us motivated into fall!

It was a pleasure to see so many of you at our most recent annual meeting in the Carolinas. With nearly 80 attendees, it was our most popular meeting in many years. From college campuses to breeding programs to private gardens there was something for everyone with the overall connecting theme of Magnolia enthusiasm. Thanks again to Andra Nus, Kevin Parris, and Susan Booth in particular for their organization and planning of this meeting. More detailed descriptions of our visits occur elsewhere in this Newsletter, but a first for me: after fifteen years of coming to MSI meetings, I am no stranger to the concept of dragging members back onto the bus. However, this was the first time I have actually seen the bus itself refusing to leave and needing to be dragged away from the garden. For those of you who have visited Marilyn Grist's garden, however, it is hardly surprising. More seriously, a particular highlight for me was being able to observe so many of Dr. Kevin Parris' selections and not just to see their potential for carrying ornamental display into late spring, but also to hear the stories of how much collaboration there was between various MSI members to collect pollen, send pollen, advise on crosses, evaluate, trial, and appreciate: a contemporary example of the culture of experimental crossing and novel cultivar production that characterized the Society around the time of its founding.

The Magnolia Society International Board of Directors also met in Greenville prior to the start of the meeting program. Well, full disclosure, sans your President who was amidst flight delays but able to monitor from afar via Zoom. Thanks to former President and long-time board member Andrew Bunting for covering for me in the interim. For topics of discussion, we focused on some immediate opportunities to improve and update our website, potentially even with some cost savings by shopping for different membership management vendors. One major benefit of our website is the availability of our robust and historic journal archive. We are in the process of updating this and have scanned over a decade of back issues, though in an example of falling victim to our own success, learned our current web service lacks the storage space to hold the expanded archive. We are currently exploring additional options which will allow these to be accessible, and ideally even more easily discoverable by those outside our immediate circle.

As I discussed during our annual meeting, MSI has recently partnered with a management firm, NAV & Associates, to help support the administrative needs of the Society. It has been a learning curve for both parties this year, however we are hopeful this will result in easier contact with the Society and smoother membership management moving ahead.

Looking towards the future, MSI intends to embark on a strategic planning process beginning next year. This will help us to determine specific objectives the society can work towards, which can both help set fundraising priorities and guide new board member recruitment efforts. I for one am excited about the opportunities this presents for us and look forward to sharing the results with you in the near future.

Happy summer and as always, thanks for your support of the Society.

Inside

Editor's Notes 2
Magnolias in Estonia's Tallinn Botanic Garden 2
Successes with Asian Evergreen Magnolias 4
2027 Conference Tour and Annual Meeting 6
Two Phelan Bright Conference Stipends Awarded 6
The MSI Biltmore Tour 6
A Tout Le Monde 7
2026 Conference in the Carolina Mountains 8
Plant Sale Success 10
Andra's Pawpaw Ice Cream 10
Magnolia tarahumara Update 11
Virtual *Magnolia pacifica* Update 11
Lonicera henryi as a Groundcover? 11
New Magnolia Book from Charles Williams 12
Chollipo Arboretum Receives Award 12

Unless otherwise indicated, articles in this Newsletter were authored by the Editor, Hale Booth, hale.booth@gmail.com ©

EDITOR'S NOTES

By: Hale Booth, Signal Mountain, TN

This issue of your MSI Newsletter focuses on two primary subjects: success with magnolias in cold as well as hot and humid conditions. This is explored with feature articles about growing magnolias in Tallinn, Estonia in northern Europe and the success Gary Knox has found along the hot, humid, and steamy US gulf coast. The second area of focus is on the people, plants, and experiences from our recent annual conference with tours in the mountains of the Carolinas. As a number of members have previously mentioned, our magnolia conferences are not only about these amazing plants, but also the opportunity to renew friendships while making new ones.

As usual, if there is not a byline beneath an article title it was written by your Newsletter Editor. I also want to thank Anita Figlar for her assistance in proofreading this Newsletter. We always welcome Newsletter articles from members, and these can be submitted to me at Hale.Booth@gmail.com. Susan and I look forward to seeing many of you in England next spring.

MAGNOLIAS IN ESTONIA'S TALLINN BOTANIC GARDEN

By: Anu Kaur, Curator – Tallinn Botanic Garden
Olev Abner, Head Dendrologist – Tallinn Botanic Garden

(Editor's note: This past December Susan and I had the opportunity to travel to Estonia, which is on the northern Baltic Sea near Saint Petersburg, Russia. While in Tallinn we visited the Tallinn Botanic garden where we were fortunate to meet Ms. Anu Kaur, the curator, and look at their growing magnolia collection. Anu and a colleague Olev Abner, head dendrologist, kindly agreed to submit an article to your MSI Newsletter describing how their magnolia collection has performed.)

Entrance to Estonia's Tallinn Botanic Garden. Photo by Hale Booth

Tallinn Botanic Garden was founded in 1961, and the first trees in the arboretum were planted in 1963. In the form of a landscape park, the arboretum lies on 22 hectares (54 acres) in the primeval valley of the river Pirita at an altitude of 9.5 to 24 m above sea level (31 to 79 feet). In the autumn of 2025, the arboretum had 1,747 taxa and varieties of woody plants. Most of our magnolia varieties are donations from private plant collector Yuri Shergalin. In 2010, a total of 19 different varieties were planted in our arboretum in addition to the previous magnolia species. Unfortunately, not all of them survived.

Before that we had *Magnolia acuminata*, *M. tripetala*, *M.* × *loebneri* (1991), *M. kobus* and *M. stellata* (1985) and *M. sieboldii* (2007, quite poor looking for a few years!) – these relatively winter-hardy species are suitable for our climate.

HARDY SPECIES

Magnolia kobus comes in two different provenances in our arboretum and both are doing excellent. The younger tree (planted in 2007, provenance – from Mustila Arboretum, Finland) started to bloom in 2012 and is covered with flowers every year. Also promising for our climate is *M. stellata* and the hybrid of those two, *M.* × *loebneri*.

Nearby grows the *M. tripetala* – also flowering, but not every year. It seems to have some resentment towards cold winters or at least erratic springs with cold nights and sunny days.

Hence to be known as the most resilient of the *Magnolia* genus – the Cucumber tree (*M. acuminata)*, our tree of this species (planted in 1991) has suffered from something in the soil during the last few years. There may be more than one thing bothering it, maybe even sunny winter days that promote too early activity in the trunk and causes damage in the bark.

The species itself is promising, and in the southern part of Estonia we have the tallest and oldest magnolia in the country, which is over 20 m (66') high with a chest circumference of 202 cm (6.6') [2025].

As probably the hardiest among magnolias, the Cucumber tree is used in hybridization to give a higher hardiness component. Many magnolia varieties such as 'Daphne', 'Red Baron', 'Sunsation', 'Olivia' etc. have *M. acuminata* as one of their parents.

CULTIVARS/HYBRIDS

One of the most outstanding varieties from this donation is 'Lois' *Magnolia acuminata* × (*M. acuminata* × *M. denudata*), which began to bloom at a very young age and is constantly in full bloom year after year. 'Daphne' has yellow flowers as well but a darker butter yellow, not the same bright yellow as 'Lois'.

An excellent bloomer is 'Red Baron' – early age and trustworthy – which blooms every year and is healthy. The 'Roseanna' has brighter pink flowers – a good bloomer but with a scent that may not be pleasant for everybody.

An outstanding bloomer from a young age is the *M. sieboldii* 'Colossus' – profusely covered with pure white flowers every year.

A very interesting hybrid in our collection is the *M. sieboldii* × *M. tripetala.* The flowers of this hybrid are more like those of *M. sieboldii* but bigger, more spherical in shape and very fragrant, and its leaves are gigantic like those of *M. tripetala*. The only drawback is that the first leaves of spring are always crinkled and stay like this throughout the season. It looks like somebody has been chewing on them, but the real problem is probably that the first leaves suffer from late frosts. The latter foliage grows as normal by size and form.

continued on pg. 3

Dormant Magnolias gaining some leaf litter mulch.
Note how limbs sweep to the ground. Photo by Hale Booth

Some early blooming magnolias, especially those that bloom before the leaves emerge, may easily suffer from late frosts. It is quite common that, for example, the *Magnolia kobus* or *M.* × *loebneri* that are in full bloom in early May or sometimes the end of April may show brown flowers on a morning after a frosty night.

Because of their weak root system, magnolias do not tolerate root competition. Based on our experience, most magnolias grow better if the grass sod has been removed around young trees.

NOT HARDY ENOUGH?

There are many reasons why the plant may die. About those cultivars which didn't survive in our arboretum: the year after planting, 'Caerhays Surprise', 'Sunsation' and 'Golden Gift' were all gone, and 2 years after planting 'Blushing Belle' was gone. 'Olivia' survived for 3 years. The reason may or may not be the winter tolerance.

Out of the survivors, 'Butterfly' has been the poorest grower over the years so far. The first ten years, we had to cut away most of the last year's growth. In recent years, as the last winters have been quite mild, 'Butterfly' has been getting stronger and has even had some flowers. Maybe its childhood (not a happy one) is over for now. The same occurred with 'Dennis Ledvina' – both started to bloom on the tenth year after planting in the arboretum. Let's see how they do this spring.

LOCAL CLIMATE

Tallinn's climate is moderately maritime. The average air temperature between 1991 and 2020 was 6.4°C (44°F) and the average annual precipitation was 700 mm (28"), which would be well suited to many magnolias from East Asia and North America. Tallinn is under the influence of low pressure for about 2/3 of the year, with low pressure being particularly frequent in autumn and winter, where in some years up to 75% of the days are dominated by low pressure.

In contrast, in summer, Tallinn is under the influence of high-pressure systems for an average of 48% of the days, and spring and the first half of summer are also the sunniest. The average duration of sunshine in June is 298 hours.

The coldest month of the year is February, with an average air temperature of -5.0°C (23°F). Some years, arctic air masses reach Tallinn and the temperature drops below -20°C (-4°F). The absolute minimum was -34.4°C (-30° F) [10 February 1940]. Low temperatures occur with southeast and northeast winds or in calm weather.

The hottest month is July, with an average air temperature of 16.6°C (62°F). The absolute maximum air temperature in Tallinn has been 34.3°C (94°F) [30 July 1994]. In summer, temperatures above 25°C (77°F) are most often experienced due to southerly and southeasterly winds. The annual distribution of precipitation is uneven. The most precipitation occurs in July and August, averaging 79–80 mm (≈ 3"). The least precipitation occurs in February and March, 32–33 mm (≈ 1"). There are autumns when it rains heavily, with 178–181 mm (≈ 7") of precipitation in August–September 1978. Typically, it rains in Tallinn for 2–5 consecutive days. Torrential rains occur. The record for daily precipitation in Tallinn belongs to the Kloostrimetsa hydrometric station: on 21 August 1985, 120 mm (4.7 ") of rainwater was measured there, which fell over 12 hours. About 15% of precipitation is solid and 70% liquid; the rest is mixed.

For magnolias, low precipitation in spring at the beginning of the growing season is unfavorable.

In about half of the years, there is no permanent snow cover in Tallinn. The duration of snow cover varies from year to year. Most often, snow cover forms in December and melts in March.

In February 1924, the official maximum thickness of snow cover was measured in Tallinn at 104 cm (3.4'). That winter there was a lot of snow – permanent snow cover lasted in Tallinn until May 3!

Late frosts are a problem in spring and can still occur in the first half of June. Late frosts often damage the flowers of early-flowering magnolias (*Magnolia kobus*, *M. stellata, M.* × *loebneri*) and the leaves of other species.

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SUCCESSES WITH ASIAN EVERGREEN MAGNOLIAS IN THE HOT, HUMID GULF COAST OF NORTH FLORIDA

By: Dr. Gary W. Knox, Retired Professor University of Florida, past MSI President

Asian evergreen magnolias are of great interest to breeders and gardeners as well as botanists, taxonomists and conservation biologists. China and neighboring southeastern Asia are acknowledged as a center of *Magnolia* diversity, containing a large proportion of the world's 372 Magnolia species, although not all these are evergreen (Magnolia Plum. ex L. | Plants of the World Online | Kew Science). This region has widely variable physical geography, climates, soils, and biomes resulting in this fore-mentioned diversity. Since the 1970s, many species from this region were newly described, collected and distributed to botanic gardens, scientific institutions, and breeders across the world.

From an ornamental perspective, the diversity of Asian evergreen magnolias offers possibilities of new forms, new flower colors, and wider adaptabilities of evergreen magnolias to gardens. Formal and informal evaluations of these species are important to better assess their potential garden use. Gary W. Knox Gardens of the Big Bend in Quincy, Florida, is fortunate to have a small collection of these species and hybrids and can report our experiences with their adaptability to the acid soils and hot, humid conditions of the greater US Gulf Coast, specifically in north Florida.

Site Conditions

Gary W. Knox Gardens of the Big Bend are located about 10 miles south of the Georgia state border, 20 miles west of Tallahassee, Florida, and 50 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico. The site has an elevation of about 190 ft (58 m). The Gardens are in USDA Cold Hardiness Zone 8b (average annual minimum temperatures of 15 to 20°F (-9.4 to – 6.7°C); 2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map | USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map) and AHS Heat Zone 9 (120 to 150 days per year when the temperature exceeds 86°F (30°C); Heat Zones, Plant Health, and the AHS Heat Zone Map | United States Botanic Garden). Average annual rainfall is about 56 inches (142 cm), mostly occurring in winter and summer. The soil for most of the Gardens is a Ruston loamy fine sand with pH of 5.8. Additional site and planting conditions are given at the end of this article.

Evaluation Protocol

More than 95 species, hybrids and cultivars of *Magnolia* have been planted in the Gardens. Of these, 13 species qualify as "Asian evergreen" magnolias and 15 hybrids have parentage from one or more Asian evergreen species. In some cases there are multiple plants of a species or hybrid.

I evaluated evergreen magnolias in the Gardens in February and April 2026 using a rating system ranging from 1 to 5 where 1=very poor vigor/plant growth; 2=poor vigor/plant growth; 3=acceptable vigor/plant growth; 4=good vigor/plant growth; 5=excellent vigor/plant growth. Note that many species are represented by only one plant, trees were not the same size at planting, and all trees were not planted at the same time. However, comparative performance of established trees over several years can provide insight to their adaptability; newly planted evergreens are excluded. I also evaluated North American native evergreens *Magnolia grandiflora* and *Magnolia virginiana* for comparison to the Asian evergreens.

Results and Discussion

All but one of the 13 Asian evergreen *Magnolia* species have grown well in the acid soils and warm, humid conditions of the north Florida Gulf Coast (Table 1). Standout Asian evergreen *Magnolia* species with ratings of 4 or above include *Magnolia chapensis*, *Magnolia compressa*, *Magnolia figo*, *Magnolia kachirachirai*, and *Magnolia laevifolia*. These ratings are comparable to those of the native North American evergreens: *M. grandiflora* had an average rating of 5.0 (25 plants) and *M. virginiana* had an average rating of 4.3 (10 plants).

Three Asian species (*Magnolia cavaleriei* var. *platypetala*, *Magnolia foveolata* and *Magnolia maudiae*) would have received higher ratings had I evaluated them in previous years. However, the Florida drought in 2025-2026 was described by NASA Science as the worst since 2012 (Drought Parches Florida - NASA Science) and the U.S. Drought Monitor showed north Florida in moderate to exceptional drought from Sept. 23, 2025, through May 26, 2026 (Current Map | U.S. Drought Monitor). The Magnolia Garden is irrigated occasionally during drought but this may have been insufficient for plants of these species, resulting in their decline and lower ratings. Normal rainfall or regular irrigation may improve their condition.

Richard Figlar (Magnolian Grove Arboretum, South Carolina, Zone 7a/b) similarly reported success with all the above mentioned species except *M. kachirachirai*, indicating broader adaptability to southeastern North America (ISSUE 89_24-37_CULTIVATION OF ELEVEN HARDY ASIAN EVERGREEN MAGNOLIAS IN SOUTHEASTERN US AN UPDATE_RICHARD B. FIGLAR.pdf). With flowering, however, Richard Figlar found *M. maudiae* less suitable as an ornamental in southeastern North America due to its late-winter flowering and associated freeze damage. I can concur since *M. maudiae* has been in the Gardens for 26 years and its flowers were damaged by January freezes most years. Only twice has flowering proceeded to fruit set.

The Gardens contain 31 hybrids with parentage from one or more Asian evergreen species (Table 2). Most of these hybrids have succeeded with acceptable to excellent growth. The success of these hybrids is perhaps due to hybrid vigor (often suggested by breeders) or, alternatively, cooperators may have shared only the most vigorous of their hybrid progeny.

Of these 31, 20 hybrids contain *M. figo*, *M. figo* var. *crassipes*, or *M. figo* var. *skinneriana* as one of the parents (with a collective average rating of 4.4). *M. figo* is a long-established resident of Southern gardens so perhaps it is not surprising that its hybrids also may retain this adaptability. Twenty-two hybrids have parents that are exclusively within Section *Michelia* (average rating 4.3) and seven have parents within Section *Manglietia* (average rating 3.7). Two hybrids have parents from different Sections; while inter-sectional hybridization is typically more difficult to accomplish, both of these hybrids were rated 5 (excellent vigor/plant growth).

Only five of the 58 plants of Asian evergreen species and hybrids were rated "very poor" or "poor" for vigor and plant growth (ratings of 1 and 2). Three of these five had additional plants of the same lineage that were rated 3 (acceptable vigor/plant growth) or higher. Of these three, a plant of one clone of *Magnolia kwangtungensis* had a rating of 1 (very poor) but a different clone received a rating of 5 (excellent). Similarly, one plant of *Magnolia ernestii* subsp. *szechuanica* received a rating of 1 (very poor) while another plant of the same species was rated 4 (good). One plant of *Magnolia* (*yuyuanensis* × *insignis*) received a rating of 2 while a second plant had a rating of 3. Although these ratings vary, these results suggest that the

continued on pg. 5

three selections deserve a second chance and, at the least, should be evaluated further. Success with at least one plant holds out hope that the "right" clone will grow and thrive.

Single plants of *Magnolia sphaerantha* and *Magnolia* (*figo* var. *crassipes* × (*foveolata* × *laevifolia*)) each received ratings of 1 (very poor vigor/plant growth). *M. sphaerantha* results were disappointing in that it had been growing well for several years and attained a height over 20 ft (6 m). However, two successive winters had extended periods of below-freezing weather (not unusual) coupled with wet snow (very unusual) resulting in extensive dieback. *M. sphaerantha* was killed to the ground after the first cold, wet winter but recovered and regrew. Damage after the second cold, wet winter was apparently too much for this plant. *M. sphaerantha* is native to the region around Kunming, China. Kunming is known as the "land of eternal spring" because of its mild climate: winter low temperatures average 39°F (3.9°C) and summer high temperatures average 78°F (25.6°C) (Climate & Weather Averages in Kunming, Yunnan, China). As a result of evolving in this climate, I presume this species is intolerant of regular below-freezing temperatures, thus excluding climatic zones of Zone 8 (north Florida) and colder.

The low rating for *M.* (*figo* var. *crassipes* × (*foveolata* × *laevifolia*)) may be a fluke since other hybrid combinations with these species performed well. In general, poor plant performance may be due to a mismatch of plant ecotype with climate, a clone's poor vigor, a "weak" individual plant, improper plant siting (i.e. planted in too much sun or shade for that species), stress from poor care, or just plain "bad luck".

Summary

The general success of Asian evergreen magnolias in north Florida suggests they can be added to the plant palette of warm, humid southeastern North America (Cold Hardiness Zone 8b) and similar climates. Notably, a number of these species performed comparably to the native North American evergreens. Even poorly performing Asian evergreens in this trial should be re-evaluated to determine or refine their adaptability. Gardeners can look forward to many outstanding new garden plants from these and future evergreen magnolias!

Additional site conditions and planting description

The Gardens are located on the grounds of the University of Florida/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center outside Quincy, Florida. The site has an elevation of about 190 ft (58 m), and is located at 30°:32′:67″N and 84°:35′:79″W.

As I am not a taxonomist, I have relied on plant donors and taxonomist-visitors for confirmation of *Magnolia* species and hybrid heritage. Initial plantings occurred in 2000 and magnolias have been added almost every year. Magnolias typically were planted from #3 or #5 containers. Trees in the formal Magnolia Garden are 20 ft (6 m) apart on-center with mulch and turfgrass between trees while magnolias in other areas of the Gardens of the Big Bend are typically incorporated in mulched beds in mixed plantings with shrubs and other trees. In both situations, trees are irrigated occasionally during drought and are occasionally fertilized in spring with a slow release fertilizer applied within 3 ft of the trunk at a rate of 6 lb N/1000 ft². Garden and tree maintenance are minimal.

Table 1.

Plant vigor ratings of Asian evergreen Magnolia species growing at Gary W. Knox Gardens of the Big Bend, Quincy, Florida (USDA Cold Hardiness Zone 8b). Rating: 1=very poor vigor/plant growth; 2=poor vigor/plant growth; 3=acceptable vigor/plant growth; 4=good vigor/plant growth; 5=excellent vigor/plant growth.

Magnolia		**Rating or average rating**	**Individual ratings if more than one plant**
Species	**Taxonomic section**		
chapensis	Michelia	4.3	3, 5, 5
coco	Gwillimia	3	
compressa	Michelia	5	
ernestii subsp. *szechuanica*	Michelia	2.5	1, 4
figo	Michelia	5.0	5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5
floribunda	Michelia	3	
foveolata	Michelia	3.5	2, 5
kachirachirai	Gynopodium	4	
kwangtungensis	Manglietia	3.0	1, 5
laevifolia	Michelia	4.0	3, 5
maudiae	Michelia	3.3	3, 3, 4
platypetala	Michelia	3	
sphaerantha	Michelia	1	

Table 2.

Plant vigor ratings of evergreen Magnolia hybrids containing at least one Asian species growing at Gary W. Knox Gardens of the Big Bend, Quincy, Florida (warm, humid climate; USDA Cold Hardiness Zone 8b). Rating: 1=very poor vigor/plant growth; 2=poor vigor/plant growth; 3=acceptable vigor/plant growth; 4=good vigor/plant growth; 5=excellent vigor/plant growth.

***Magnolia* hybrid parentage**	**Rating or average rating**	**Individual ratings if more than one plant**	**Taxonomic Section(s) and Notes**
Magnolia ((laevifolia × champaca) × figo var. *crassipes)*	3		All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia ((tripetala × (tripetala × obovata)) × insignis))	5		*M. tripetala* and *M. obovata* are in Section Rhytidospermum; *M. insignis* is in Section Manglietia
Magnolia (champaca × figo var. crassipes)	5		All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (changhungtana × insignis)	3		All parents are in Section Manglietia
Magnolia (changhungtana × kwangtungensis)	3		All parents are in Section Manglietia
Magnolia (delavayi × grandiflora)	5		*M. delavayi* is in Section Michelia; *M. grandiflora* is in Section Magnolia
Magnolia (elegantifolia × figo)	4		All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (figo × doltsopa)	4.7	5, 5, 4	All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (figo var. *crassipes × (foveolata × laevifolia))*	1		All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (foveolata × laevifolia)	3.5	3, 4	All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (kwangtungensis × (yuyuanensis × insignis))	5.0	5, 5, 5	All parents are in Section Manglietia
Magnolia (laevifolia × (figo x doltsopa))	4.7	4, 5, 5	All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (laevifolia × figo)	4.75	4, 4, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5	All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (maudiae × figo var. *crassipes)*	4		All parents are in Section Michelia
Magnolia (yuyuanensis × insignis)	2.5	2, 3	All parents are in Section Manglietia

2027 MSI CONFERENCE TOUR AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SOUTHEAST ENGLAND

By: Andra Nus, Jim Gardiner, John Wotton and Alan Robertson

There will be much more information coming to you in the next month or two as plans are finalized for our 2027 Conference and tour in botanically rich southeast England. However, we want you to have a brief overview of what is in store for MSI members.

Our MSI conference coordinator team has been busy planning a spectacular MSI meeting and tour of Southeast England gardens for our 2027 meeting and tour. Plan for arrival Tuesday March 30 and departure on Thursday April 8.

Details regarding lodging are still being worked out but the plan is to spend the first six nights in the same hotel in Kent or Sussex as we tour gardens during the day on a 70-passenger coach. For the last three days we will move to a hotel in Surry.

Day one, March 31, will include visits to Leonardslee and High Beeches. The stunning gardens at Leonardslee reopened in 2019 after a 10-year closure for extensive renovations. It has one of the finest woodland gardens in all of England. High Beeches has 27 acres of very rare, exotic and unusual plants.

Day two, April 1, will include visits to Nymans and Borde Hill, two famous gardens with amazing collections of magnolias. Nymans is a National Trust garden set around a romantic house and ruins. Borde Hill is a nationally important English country garden on 383 acres.

Day three, April 2, will be more of a historical visit to two famous historical homes and their gardens. We will visit Hever, Ann Boleyn's childhood home, and Chartwell, Winston Churchill's home.

Day four, April 3, will include tours to the famous Kew Wakehurst and Sheffield Park, both National Trust Gardens. Kew Wakehurst is a 500-acre garden managed by Kew Gardens and home of the Millennium Seed Bank. Sheffield Park is a historic landscape with wonderful lakes and gardens.

Day five, April 4, will be an amazing day visiting Great Comp and Maurice Foster's personal garden at White House Farm. Great Comp is known for its magnolia collection, and White House Farm has a spectacular collection of plants.

Day six, seven, and eight will take us to the Surrey area, with a visit to Ramster Hall and Garden and Millais Nurseries on day six. Day seven will be a full day to enjoy RHS Wisley and their wonderful magnolias. The final day will be reserved for The Savill Garden and The Valley Gardens of Windsor Great Park.

Please plan to join us and enjoy the incredible trees and shrubs while you learn from experts and fellow members.

TWO PHELAN BRIGHT CONFERENCE STIPENDS AWARDED

We are pleased to report that MSI, through the Phelan Bright Fund, was able to award two stipends to assist two doctoral students with the costs of participating in our recent conference and tour in the Carolina mountains. This fund is being built with the generous support of our members and is available each year to assist with the conference expenses of students or early-career professionals. These awards are competitive and the final selections are made by the MSI Board. This year's recipients were Edison Rea Sancho and Piper Cole, both of whom have demonstrated a strong interest in magnolias.

Edison Rea Sancho is a doctoral student at the University of Kentucky, studying Ecuadorian Magnolias. Some of you may recall that previously MSI had provided $6,400 funding for his research. Edison gave a presentation to the conference on his research. Some information on him and his interests are available here: https://bio.as.uky.edu/spring-2025-graduate-student-spotlight

Piper Cole is a doctoral student at the University of Georgia where she is studying magnolias and their pollinators. Piper chose magnolias for her study since they are such an ancient group of plants. Jean Linsky who serves on your MSI Board suggested "I think (Piper's) connections to the MSI could be beneficial for her as she is active in the data/sample gathering process of her thesis". A bio about her and her magnolia project is available here: https://sites.google.com/view/pipercole?pli=1

THE MSI BILTMORE TOUR

By: Jay Bost, Boone NC

On May 6th I had the pleasure of beginning my first attendance of a Magnolia Society International meeting. Before the meeting started, event planners had organized a day trip to the Biltmore castle and estate gardens. As I live in Boone, North Carolina I opted to meet the bus at the entrance of The Biltmore, a place I had heard much about and driven by many times but had not visited. As I waited for the bus, I had the pleasure of getting to know Andra Nus, one of this year's meeting hosts, and to talk pawpaws a bit.

When the bus arrived, I jumped on and we entered the main drive into The Biltmore through a stone entrance gate. We later learned that Frederick Olmsted, who designed the extensive gardens, had planned the meandering drive to the Estate house. This approach felt long, slow, and as if we were traversing deep woods – far away from Asheville and highways.

We got off the bus in front of the impressive Estate house and were soon met by our guide through the gardens and grounds, Steven Ayers, a long-time horticulturist at the Biltmore, in charge of the renowned Azalea garden.

continued on pg. 7

We were led through the numerous parts of the garden, including the glass house with its impressive orchid collection, the walled garden with roses and perennials (along with some nice *Magnolia virginiana*), and down into the Spring Garden and Azalea Garden. Along the way Steven told us many stories of champion trees, storm damage he has witnessed during his time there, and the joys and pains of public gardens.

During our walk we were greeted by flowering *Magnolia sieboldii*, *Magnolia virginiana*, and *Magnolia tripetala*. We saw some nice specimens of *Magnolia macrophylla* which I was surprised to hear Steven say were becoming a bit weedy in the forest bordering the Azalea garden. Other than Magnolias, some of the highlights of the visit for me were a wonderful flowering *Cladrastis kentukea* 'Perkin's Pink', *Stewartia malacodendron*, and *Calycanthus chinense*. We managed to get pretty wet during our walk around the gardens as much needed rain fell on us. We made it back to the bus for lunch and then most of us did self-guided tours of the main house.

Stewartia malacodendron in bloom at the Biltmore.
Photo by Jay Bost

Normally touring houses is not my cup of tea, but the information provided on handheld devices was great and the scale and craftsmanship of the house were super impressive. On the second floor were large paintings of Richard Morris Hunt and Frederick Law Olmsted, who had designed the house and grounds respectively. Apparently, they were mentors and friends to George Vanderbilt and family – if only today's oligarchs had such taste and supported such visionaries!

This was a great way to start getting to know Magnolia Society folks and was the beginning of a wonderful few days of getting lost in the Magnolia Triangle.

A TOUT LE MONDE, A STUCK BUS AND AN AWESOME HORT TUBE VIDEO TOUR

On the first meeting day, with a full load of snacks and bottles of water, we boarded our two buses at the MSI conference hotel in Greenville SC on a glorious morning. The first stop was A Tout Le Monde, Marilyn Grist's extensive private ten-acre garden full of an incredible array of woody plants and magnolias. Our first bus driver promptly got our bus stuck on the edge of an embankment in the overflow parking lot. Experience has shown me that if you participate in enough garden tours, eventually something similar will happen with your tour bus. This is simply because the plants and gardens we go to see don't grow along the side of a road and our typically skilled bus drivers must often navigate rural country lanes, dirt roads, tight suburban streets or perhaps loose gravel or soggy fields.

With the first bus firmly stuck, we piled out of the bus and began exploring the garden rooms as the bus company began calling around for a really big tow truck.

We only had an hour to explore the A Tout Le Monde gardens and everyone quickly realized they could spend hours or a day in the well-labelled garden. Fortunately, two of our MSI members along on the tour were Jim and Stephany Putnam. They have pioneered a business as botanical videographers. Jim made arrangements with Marilyn to return in a few days and film much of the 10-acre garden. The Putnam's have a YouTube channel known as Hort Tube with an extensive amount of content regarding gardens, gardeners, plants and otherwise useful information. They also have an even more impressive following of their Hort Tube channel on YouTube. The direct link to the Putnam's A Tout Le Monde video is: https://youtu.be/lH8x-rNOI7k?is=Q5v5uoMqiG9c78nl

If you are not familiar with their work, go to YouTube and use its search function (the little magnifying glass icon) to search for Hort Tube and once there, click around and check out some of the other garden related videos that Stephany and Jim have made and posted.

Infamous bus. Photo by Susan Booth

2026 MAGNOLIA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN THE CAROLINA MOUNTAINS

By: Ron Rabideau- Retired Nurseryman, Plant Breeder of Rhododendrons, Magnolias and Daylilies- New Jersey

It had been quite some time since I'd attended a Magnolia Society conference-in fact, I'd only been to one in Philadelphia, in 2016. The weather didn't cooperate well then; a late frost left most of the blossoms frozen. This convention, scheduled for a later bloom time, wouldn't have that problem, and would allow the viewing of the early-summer blooming types. It also included visits to many places I had been dying to see.

It was a 10-hour drive from New Jersey (outside of Philadelphia where I live) to Greenville, SC. I got a late start and the last 2 hours were pure misery as I was driving in a torrential downpour. It felt like time stood still. The weather for the rest of the conference was pure Goldilocks—not too hot, not too cold. I skipped the pre-conference tour to Biltmore because my wife and I had visited there a few years earlier.

I brought with me three cut branches with flowers of my soon-to-be-registered hybrid of *M. officinalis* 'Fireworks' × 'Angel Mist', which will be called 'Constance Valeda' after my mom. I was able to place the huge arrangement on the registration table where it attracted a lot of attention (see photo on back cover of Newsletter). Dinner the first night was on our own, so a small group of us found a local pub. It was a great way to spend time with old acquaintances and meet lots of new people.

Evening 1: Lectures

The first formal activity consisted of two lectures back at the Aloft Hotel. The first speaker was Greg Paige, the recent new Director of Horticulture at the JC Raulston Arboretum. Before that, he spent many years at the Bartlett Arboretum, where he assembled what is possibly the largest collection of magnolias in the US. Greg's talk was an entertaining overview of our native magnolias.

The second speaker was Dr. Tom Ranney. If you haven't heard of him already, he is the JC Raulston Distinguished Professor in North Carolina State University's Dept. of Horticultural Science. He and his team at the Mountain Crop Improvement Lab have been doing advanced breeding of many genera, including magnolias, for quite a few years. He showed us some examples of their work. Magnolias that intrigued me were *M. guangdongensis* with great indumentum, and 'Lv Xing', a creamy white with bold contrasting red veins. The latter was crossed onto 'Yellow Bird', and Tom later provided seedlings to attendees after the plant sale.

Day 1: Gardens & Field Research

Our first visit was to Dr. Marilyn Grist's garden, À Tout le Monde. This 10-acre arboretum has over 100 magnolias as well as a great many other plants and specialty gardens. The house sits high on a wooded hill with a beautiful eagle's-eye view of the lowland along Terry Creek, all within the property. I could have easily spent an entire day exploring here. Soon after arriving, we found a special magnolia: Kevin Parris' 'Melissa Parris' in full bloom! Despite one of our buses getting stuck, there was not enough time here, and I would love to return earlier in the season when the deciduous magnolias are in bloom.

Dr. Tom Ranney discussing some of their magnolia breeding. Photo by Hale Booth

Our next stop was the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center in Mills River, NC. We entered a large "head house" (the work area attached to greenhouses), with labs and offices nearby. Irene Palmer showed us sample plants and posters about some of the breeding projects being done there with *Hydrangeas*, *Illiciums*, *Spireas*, dogwoods, azaleas, etc. We got to visit one greenhouse to see some stock plants for breeding of *Camellias*, *Rhododendrons*, and other genera (no pictures allowed). Then we reboarded our buses and drove to a nursery field where Tom Ranney showed us lots of cutting-edge, mostly *Magnolia* hybrids and selections, but also dogwoods. There were some exciting dwarf *M. grandifloras* and an overwhelming array of diversity.

Following that, lunch was a buffet at the nearby Sierra Nevada Brewery. Of course, there were some fine beers! Outside, the brewery was landscaped with seedling-grown plants in full bloom of the native flame azalea, *R. calendulaceum*.

After lunch, we went to the garden of co-host Andra Nus, a Research Specialist working with Tom Ranney at The Mountain Crop Improvement Lab. The main feature here was her pawpaw orchard and nursery, but one could tell from her eclectic collection of choice plants that her interests went well beyond those. She has a beautiful path through the native woods behind her home with mature Kalmia in full glorious bloom and wild *Magnolia fraseri*—and I can't forget the delicious pawpaw ice cream her family served!

The day was not yet over! From Andra's, we stopped at the mail-order nursery Mr. Maple. The owners, twin brothers Matt and Tim Nichols, met us and allowed a bit of shopping. They carry over 1,000 varieties of maples, plus quite a few other genera. I did succumb and buy a variegated *Clethra barbinervis*.

After all that, we returned to the Aloft Hotel for dinner and two more speakers. The first was Edison Rea-Sancho, an inspiring native Ecuadorian who is pursuing his doctorate in biology at the University of Kentucky. Edison detailed his adventures discovering a new species of *Magnolia* in the Tapichalaca Reserve in southern Ecuador, co-authored by him and named *Magnolia tapichalacaensis*. The second speaker was our other co-host of the conference, Dr. Kevin Parris. Kevin is a horticulture instructor and Arboretum Director at Spartanburg Community College who is continually involved in magnolia

continued on pg. 9

hybridization, especially interspecific hybrids. Kevin gave us his background of magnolia study, working on experiments crossing closely related and not very closely related magnolia species. Some of the goals are evergreen foliage for his climate, heavy blooming, colorful flowers, and fragrance. He now has many very interesting hybrids, and he gave us a preview of what we would see the next day.

Day 2: Private Gardens, Campuses, & Hybrid Fields

On Saturday, May 9th, our first stop was the garden of Boris and Jane Bauer. Their house sits above a steep hillside dropping down to a fertile floodplain. They have several hundred varieties of mostly mature magnolias scattered about informally, with multiple plants of many of them! They also have a collection of my other love, rhododendrons, with meandering paths connecting it all. I hadn't gone very far from the bus when I spotted a magnolia that knocked my socks off. It was a *Magnolia sieboldii* 'Colossus' × *insignis* 'Anita Figlar'—that much I could tell because I've been growing a sibling of it I received from Bill Smith. However, the flowers on mine are nowhere near as rich in color as this plant. It might be the cv 'Riveting Rosie'. Kevin Parris played a part in the origin of that plant because he gave a seedling to Michael Dirr, which Mike then named 'Riveting Rosie'. It is not currently available for sale anywhere to my knowledge. This arboretum is another one I would love to visit again to catch the early blooming magnolias.

'Riveting Rosie'. Photo by Hale Booth

Our next stop was Wofford College in Spartanburg. This beautifully landscaped and well-maintained 195-acre college has a great number of old specimens of *Magnolia grandiflora*. We had a group photo taken on the steps of Old Main, built in 1854, one of the oldest buildings on campus.

Group Photo by Susan Booth

We continued from there to the nearby arboretum at the Milliken Research Corporation. This very tastefully landscaped corporate campus has sweeping vistas. The Zelkova Allée, specified by Michael Dirr himself, terminates at a fountain surrounded by a ring of *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Bracken's Brown Beauty'. There were some newly planted examples of some of Kevin's magnolia hybrids planted here as well.

Dr. Kevin Parris showing some of the trial plantings of his magnolia breeding program. Photo by Hale Booth

Jim Putnam and David Parks enjoying the fountain and ring of 'Bracken's Brown Beauty' magnolias at the Milliken Research Corporation. Photo by Hale Booth

Then we were off to see Kevin Parris' domain at Spartanburg Community College. Wow! His trial fields had row after row of exciting new hybrids. It was so much fun to see the diversity and discuss and compare the pros and cons of so many unique plants. The college campus is also beautifully landscaped, and the original tree of Kevin's 'Melissa Parris' was in full bloom. A catered dinner was served at the Horticulture Pavilion, followed by an outstanding auction and sale of magnolias!

Magnolia kwangtungensis at Spartanburg Community College. Photo by Hale Booth

Day 3: Post-Conference Tour

I attended the post-conference tour to The Bartlett Arboretum on Sunday. I'd been wanting to visit for many years, since when I was at RareFind Nursery and sold many magnolias and rhododendrons to them. The Director, Adam Black, and Zac Hill, Plant Records Specialist, were very helpful showing us around and answering questions.

I was pleasantly shocked to see several large trees of one of my own magnolia introductions, 'Fancy Dude'—an open-pollinated seedling from 'Big Dude'! I was also excited to see a very large plant of the endangered (in Japan) *M. sinostellata.* There were so many specimen plants here; it is truly a magnolia museum where every magnolia is given plenty of space to show how it grows.

Continued on pg. 10

But Bartlett is not just about magnolias. At the visitor center, a large rock/scree garden had recently been installed featuring many herbaceous plants. There is an extensive conifer collection, as well as a wooded area with many rhododendrons. Many other genera are represented as well. According to their web site: "some of the best collections of oaks and conifers on the east coast, the largest collection of magnolia cultivars in the world, the third largest collection of holly in the United States, as well as extensive collections of elm, crape myrtle, crabapple, maple, rhododendron, and witch hazel." Note, the Arboretum is not open to the general public except for organized tours.

Day 4: On My Own

The organized conference exceeded my expectations. It was fantastic. On my final day in SC, I traveled on my own to visit Dick and Anita Figlar. Dick is internationally renowned in *Magnolia* circles for his scholarly work on nomenclature and classification. Nestled on a mountainside, their private Magnolian Grove Arboretum showcases a remarkable collection of rare species.

Dick Figlar on a cool morning at the Bauer garden. Photo by Susan Booth

During my visit, I had the privilege of seeing two large specimens of the extremely rare *Magnolia delavayi* from China, as well as the original *Magnolia insignis* 'Anita Figlar' in full bloom. Famous for its vibrant rosy-red flowers, this plant is legendary as the parent source of that coveted color in so many modern hybrids. Dick also showed me a display case featuring the "fruits" of various species—which, as any enthusiast knows, are properly called "aggregates of follicles," not cones! The morphological diversity among them was fascinating.

While exploring these gardens and arboreta is always wonderful, the best part of the Magnolia Society is sharing these moments with old and new friends. It creates bonds that truly last a lifetime. There are far too many wonderful people I met to list them all here, but if we connected during the trip—hello again!

It's the community that makes plant societies truly special. Sharing a niche, deep passion with brilliant, welcoming people creates a unique kind of camaraderie and warmth that sticks with you long after the trip ends.

Hope to see you at the next meeting in SE England, April 2027.

PLANT SALE SUCCESS

The MSI annual plant auction is a cherished event. This is an opportunity for members to have the chance to acquire rare magnolias and their hybrids that may never be commercially available. It also is an important fundraiser for your society's magnolia research program.

The plant sale was quite a financial success and member benefit. Our Treasurer, Robert Rich, reports the sale raised $3,629 USD while also offering plants to members at very affordable prices. Available at the sale were many donated magnolias in a range of sizes from silent auctions, live auctions, or straight-out purchase. In addition, there were magnolia artworks up for bid and packets of magnolia seed available for a very nominal donation. Many of the magnolias in the plant sale are simply not available anywhere else. Dr. Kevin Parris was certainly correct when he announced months before the conference that this would be the biggest MSI magnolia auction and sale in years. As we were leaving, we learned that Dr. Tom Ranney and his staff were making a donation to all attendees. We each received a small free plant of a special deciduous magnolia they are currently working with. So, for magnolia enthusiasts this was a very special evening.

As previously mentioned, the $3,629 in revenue generated from the conference plant sale will be used to support your Magnolia Society International's periodic research grants. The MSI Board would like to thank everyone for their outstanding support of the plant sale.

A small portion of the MSI magnolia sale. Photo by Hale Booth

ANDRA'S PAWPAW ICE CREAM

During the MSI tour in the Carolina mountains, we visited Andra Nus's garden. Andra has developed a pawpaw orchard in a sunny area of her personal garden, and she is also conducting research on this American native as part of her work at the NC State University's Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center. While visiting her garden, MSI members were all treated to a cup of her delicious pawpaw ice cream. At your Newsletter editor's request, Andra has shared her recipe for pawpaw ice cream.

When ripe, pawpaw fruit has been compared to the flavors of tropical fruits: think bananas, mangos, etc. This little known

continued on pg. 11

American native fruit has a short shelf life but can be found occasionally at fall farmer's markets. An internet search for frozen pawpaw pulp will also find several sources that ship to many addresses overnight in a cooler with ice packs.

Andra's pawpaw ice cream
2 cups milk
2 cups cream
2 cups frozen pawpaw pulp
1 cup sugar

Whisk together ingredients and freeze in ice cream maker.

MAGNOLIA TARAHUMARA UPDATE

By: Tim Thibault, Curator, Woody Plant Materials - The Huntington, CA

Attendees of MSI 2024 may remember Antonio Vazquez confirming the identity of *Magnolia tarahumara* in the back of The Huntington. That plant is no longer in the back, it is in the middle of a construction project to create 33 housing units for visiting researchers. The plant is quite valuable to our collection, and the construction site is difficult to access. How do we monitor it? The GIS team does drone flights over the site about on a weekly basis. The pictures and videos allow curatorial staff to keep an eye on the status of the tree from a safe distance.

VIRTUAL *MAGNOLIA PACIFICA* UPDATE

Two years ago our Magnolia Society International met in southern California. Our local host Tim Thibault, who works for "The Huntington", offered a virtual *Magnolia pacifica* for the MSI plant auction. This means there wasn't really a plant to bid on. Since seed germination is very low, the Huntington staff would take genetic material from their specimen, and through an in vitro process in their laboratory, create a new *Magnolia pacifica*. Well, if this wasn't difficult enough, your Newsletter editor (me) had to conduct a live auction for this nonexistent and very rare plant. This was somewhat similar to the career position of a used car salesman. Thankfully we all love magnolias, and this nonexistent virtual magnolia attracted some spirited bidding and brought in a tidy amount of revenue for the MSI research fund.

John and his pot of magnolias. Photo by Max Perez

Tim is delighted and I am relieved to report that this spring, a happy John McCallen picked up his healthy-looking little pot of *Magnolia pacifica*. This evergreen magnolia, first discovered around 1993, is from the mountains of western Mexico where it is reported to grow in steep and dangerous canyons.

There is another article in this Newsletter about how Tim's team at the Huntington is using new technology in an innovative manner to monitor and safeguard their mature *Magnolia tarahumara* which is suddenly in the middle of a large construction project.

Congratulations to John McCallen!

LONICERA HENRYI AS A GROUNDCOVER?

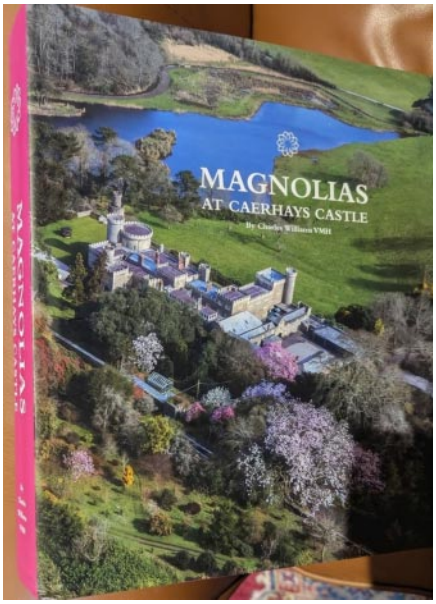
Lonicera henryi in the Tallinn Botanic Garden. Photo by Hale Booth

Deciduous magnolias can look like a garden of sticks in the winter. So, I am always looking for evergreen groundcovers that might do well through the winter under our bare magnolias. For a few years I have successfully grown this evergreen vining honeysuckle, but I have always been focused on trying to run it up or over some structure or object. This lonicera is an attractive evergreen species with mat green leaves that remind me of leucothoe varieties, just flatter.

This past December when Susan and I were in Tallinn, Estonia and visited the Tallinn Botanic Garden, we saw a significant and attractive patch of *Lonicera henryi* near the garden entrance. Cultivated as a groundcover, this provided a nice green foil to the surrounding wintery grays of deciduous plants. This honeysuckle is reportedly hardy into zone 5 (-20 degrees F and -29 C), but I do not know if it remains evergreen at these much lower temperatures.

As a vine this lonicera may be born to climb; time will tell about that. However, it certainly can make an interesting, attractive, and unexpected groundcover. *Lonicera henryi* is available from time to time through specialty mail order nurseries. We will be planting a few more of this lonicera early next spring.

AMAZING NEW MAGNOLIA BOOK FROM CHARLES WILLIAMS



Renewing friendships and making new friends at an MSI meeting is not only fun, but one also learns a lot from listening and talking with fellow attendees. This is how I learned about a new Magnolia reference work that has just been published in the United Kingdom. Jay Bost walked up after an evening lecture and showed me a large new book he had recently purchased on Magnolias at Caerhays Castle. Written by MSI member Charles Williams, the book is a large format, contains an extensive amount of magnolia photographs and weighs more that a lot of newborn infants. The large number of photographs can be very helpful in identifying particular magnolias or helping one to determine what species or cultivar of magnolia you might desire. Besides that, it is just a beautiful book.

For those of you who do not know about Charles Williams, he is an amazing plantsman from Cornwall in the UK and frequently exhibits at the famous Chelsea Flower Show. He has also written a past article for this Newsletter regarding his favorite magnolia.

Over the past centuries the Williams family has helped sponsor some of the earliest plant hunting expeditions to various wild areas of Asia. Their plant collecting continues unabated and the gardens at Caerhays in Cornwall contain many mature specimens of other woody plants in addition to magnolias. Charles Williams also operates Burncoose Nursery where, for UK residents, many of these unique botanical gems await your selection.

Mr. Williams also frequently posts interesting videos on various plants at Caerhays.

So how do you get this new magnolia book? At the present moment it is not available in the US, but that could change. However, I got my copy by opening an Amazon UK account and ordering it there. The US price for this magnolia book is about $75.00. As a new Amazon UK member, I think you may get free shipping, but this may change by the time you read this article.

Make no mistake, this book is worth more than its asking price, so order yours while they are available.

Thank you, Jay, for making us aware of this excellent new magnolia book.

CHOLLIPO ARBORETUM RECEIVES NATIONAL KOREAN AWARD

After the Korean War, Carl Ferris Miller fell in love with South Korea. This lead the American-born banker to found the Chollipo Arboretum in a beautiful but difficult seaside site in Taean County, South Korea. Dr. Miller became a Korean citizen (choosing the name Min Pyong-gal) and worked to develop and expand the arboretum until his death in 2002. He was an active member of our Magnolia Society International, and staff from Chollipo frequently participate in our annual meetings and tours.

Today the Arboretum holds approximately 17,000 accessions and a world class magnolia collection. All of this massive plant collection and the various gardens are open to the public.

Recently Keumbi Hwang with the Chollipo staff informed MSI that a collection of fifty-six historical records documenting the establishment and development of Chollipo Arboretum was officially designated as a '**National Registered Cultural Heritage**' by the Korea Heritage Service. This marks the **first time in Korea** that archival materials related to an arboretum have received this designation. The recognition honors the remarkable dedication and lifelong efforts of Carl Ferris Miller (Min Pyong-gal), who transformed barren coastal land into one of the world's most celebrated arboretums.

The Korean Times has published an extensive article about the arboretum and the new national honor they have received. For more details, included below is a link to an English news article.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/lifestyle/travel-food/20260724/chollipo-arboretum-where-plants-are-the-true-masters?utm_source=legacy_url&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=article_legacy_id

If you have trouble with the link (as I did a few times when testing), try searching for Korean Times Chollipo or visit the Magnolia Society Facebook site.

A bird's-eye view of Chollipo Arboretum in Taean County, South Chungcheong Province, July 16 / Korea Times. Photo by Choi Won-suk

SCENES FROM THE 2026 MSI ANNUAL MEETING IN THE CAROLINA MOUNTAINS

Small part of landscaped Spartanburg Community College

Magnolia (*M. changhungtana* × 'Melissa Parris')

Adam Black, speaking before tour of Bartlett Arboretum

A brief stop at Mr. Maple

Ron Rabideau and Dr. Ranney discussing a new magnolia hybrid

Magnolia (*M. sieboldii* 'Colossus' × *M. insignis* 'Anita Figlar')

Name tags waiting to be claimed

magnolia
SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
3000 Henneberry Rd.
Jamesville, NY 13078

Magnolia 'Constance Valeda' ('Fireworks' × 'Angel Mist'). A new hybrid from Ron Rabideau. Photo by Hale Booth